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ABSTRACT

Numbers 1 through 5 of the 1982 TECFORS newsletter include these articles: "A Comprehensive ESL Reading Program" (Carol Qazi); "The Purpose of the Passive" (Virginia French Allen); "'Standards' Seconded" (Timothy H. Robinson); "Vocabulary and the College-Bound International Student" (Parts 1-3) (Kerry Segel); "Using Invention Heuristics to Teach Writing" (Parts 1-3) (Ann E. Daubney-Davis); "Reading Courses in Chinese Institutions of Higher Learning" (Ann M. Johns); "Holistic Scoring of Essays" (Timothy H. Robinson); "Making the Need to Write Seem Real" (Gregory Clark); "Inner Impressions, Outer Expressions, and Real Learning" (Sue Kelly); "Sentence Construction: Bridging the Gap between Manipulation and Assimilation of Grammatical Structures" (L. Michael Evans); "Topic Schemas: A Cognitive Approach to Writing Assignments" (David A. Ross); "The Writing Strategies of ESL Students" (Mark Picus); and book reviews and notes on professional activities. (MSE)

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

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A COMPREHENSIVE ESL READING PROGRAM

Research in L1 and L2 reading during the last fifteen years or so has brought a renewed interest in how we attempt to teach this skill. It was, perhaps, never clearly understood just how successful readers undertook the task. Of course, a theoretical framework now exists, and Frank Smith has perhaps summed it up best: ". . . (The) optimum reader is one who can make use of all the redundancy of a (reading) text," (Eskey 1972:72). In short, this means that successful readers utilize the semantic, syntactic and rhetorical predictabilities in English to guess at what is upcoming in a text rather than struggle work-by-word to decode words and sentences as though they were isolated entities. Teaching reading to second language learners is no longer a chance operation of presenting a reading on a "light" topic, complete with ten to twelve comprehension questions and a battery of synonym match-ups at the end. And, most fortunately, a number of excellent textbooks are now available for teaching reading, particularly at the advanced levels; they include Reading By All Means, Reader's Choice and Developing Reading Versatility (the latter is intended for L1 readers but is also useful in advanced ESL reading classes).

Having access to good textbooks is just a part of helping advanced-level ESL students learn to read faster and understand more. I have found that reading success depends, to a great extent, on student and teacher attitude. First, all students, regardless of their reasons for wanting to learn English (academic or not), need to be assured that reading is necessary. Reading skills currently taught in the "new" textbooks include skimming, scanning and descerning fact from opinion. Anybody who visits the U. S. will want to scan bus or TV schedules or skim a book or movie review for its general content before reading the entire piece. Some students find that although they perceive no need to pay close attention to the lessons on reading textbook chapters, the lessons on uncovering the "hidden meaning" in advertisements, for example, are challenging and purposeful. Therefore, teachers should emphasize to their students that "there's something for everyone" in reading class and that the linguistics-cues approach aids in all reading tasks.

Secondly, a generalization that can safely be made is that our students are all very "dictionary-oriented." To many of them, a successful reading program includes knowing the meaning of each word. I always ask my students on the first day of class if they ever read anything in their native languages and find that they don't know the meaning of a word? (Nine out of ten hands reach for the ceiling.) "Do you always turn to your dictionary?" I ask them. (Seven out of ten heads shake, "No.") They can then be assured that they can tackle readings in English without their dictionaries by guessing from context and breaking words apart into their stems and affixes. They can also be told that authors have ways of

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letting readers know which words are important and possibly have to be looked up (Are they included in titles or subtitles? Are they included in study questions?)

Thirdly, and most importantly, teachers should demonstrate that reading hour isn't the "lost hour" of the school day. As a reading teacher, I received one of my most appreciated compliments when a student announced that reading was his favorite class as well as the one he deemed most useful. I'm also a grammar and writing teacher who tries to impart enthusiasm for grammar and writing (I would do the same for those subjects I don't teach, also), but what I tried to instill in this student's class was that reading is everything: It's both a means to an end as well as an end in itself. While the "new" reading instruction would like to dispel the notion that reading class is the place to reinforce grammar and writing lessons, it also recognizes that reading class is where all the language skills come into dynamic play. The syntax and semantics taught in grammar class and the rhetorical patterns and transitions taught in writing are all part of the reading process. Not only can students learn to predict and apply cognitive processes to reading in order to understand better, but they can use their knowledge of semantics to read in phrasal chunks and read faster. Moreover, reading class is now the class where not only academic but entertaining materials are studied,which include newspapers, magazines and advertisements.

A comprehensive ESL reading program is more than just books or lessons; it includes a spirit and appreciation for the reading process. It's a class where success is experienced just as it is in other classes.

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THE PURPOSE OF THE PASSIVE

"In general, we can say that a person uses the passive when he does not consider the agent especially important and does not wish to call attention to the agent." (Using English: Your Second Language, p. 58)

Published in 1973, the above remark represents what has long been said about the use of the passive. The point was made more recently in James E. Redden's article, "On Analyzing and Teaching the English Passive" (SPEAQ Journal, 3: 3-4:102): "In other words, when the logical object of a verb and what happens to it are the center or focus of attention, a passive will be used to describe the logical object and what happens to it."

Whatever else may have changed in the teaching of grammar, students are still being given much the same impression of the purpose of the passive. They are told that it highlights an action and the receiver of the action, diverting attention from the action's agent.

How accurate is that impression? Consider the following passive sentences from a newspaper, the Boulder Daily Camera of December 12, 1980:

1. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names Thursday postponed a decision until its June meeting on whether to rename the peak in Alaska "denali," the name it was given long ago by native Indians, because . . . .
   [Query: Is the giving of the name really considered more important here than the identity of the givers?]

2. The mayor called the remark "an insensitive colloquialism -- the kind of remark that might have been used 20 years ago by some racists, and some who might not be."
   [Query: Was the passive used here because the speaker did not wish to call attention to those using the "insensitive colloquialism"?]

3. After Mrs. Faus died, the property was owned by the Blackmarr family, which also owned a furniture store for many years.
   [Query: Was the passive used because the reporter did not consider the owner's name important?]

4. It was purchased by the First Methodist Church in 1959.
   [Query: Did the use of the passive really diminish the role of the church in that transaction? Compare the sentence: The First Methodist Church purchased it in 1959.]

Such examples raise questions about the customary explanation of the passive. Often, it seems, passive sentences with by do not indeed divert attention from the agents of actions. What then do they do? Another sentence from the Daily Camera offers a clue:

5. She was attended by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Jeffrey Bauer, who wore an empire gown of cranberry jersey and carried chrysanthemums, carnations, and snapdragons.

If students are asked to convert this into an active sentence, one purpose of the passive should become clear. There is just too much information about the agent of this action to be stuffed into subject positon. When the agent is put into a by phrase, however, the subject can be closely followed by a predicate verb (She was attended) -- a favored arrangement for English sentences. Then the copious details related to the agent of the action can be spread over the open spaces beyond the verb. That seems a plausible reason for choosing the passive in the phrasing of Example 5. In that sentence, the bride and what happened to her are certainly not the center or focus of attention; the sister-in-law clearly is.

A comparable motive may be at work in the choice of passive for the following sentence, where it would have been awkward to say enough about the agent of the action within the space normal for subject territory:

6. The foundation was set up by the popular pianist, Liberace, who dazzles audiences with candelabras, glittering jackets and keyboard acrobatics.

It would be hard to deny that the agent (the person who set up the foundation) is the center of interest here. Putting him into a by phrase does nothing to dim the spotlight. On the contrary, the passive construction provides open space in which to elaborate upon him.

In a sentence from "Letters to the Editor," we see similar use of post-verb territory for saying all that needs to be said about the agent of the action:

7. The day after his 11th birthday one of your Daily Camera carrier's bicycle was stolen from his home -- along with the bicycle of his friend -- by thieves who entered our courtyard after dark.

Here the passive does little or nothing to divert attention from the perpetrators of the theft. It may even be that the passive directs attention

to them. The end-position of the by phrase makes it possible to write of them at some length, in the 7-word segment: thieves who entered our courtyard after dark.

Examples like the foregoing also show how suspense can be produced by the passive, since the passive can delay delivery of wanted information. Suspense, of course, accounts for the use of inversion in periodic sentences, like "In the beginning was the Word . . . ." and "Underneath are the everlasting arms." In the periodic sentence, the writer withholds until the end of the clause an element essential to the sense. And so, in a slightly different fashion, does end-placement enhance dramatic effect in aphorisms like Hawthorne's "Life is made up of marble and mud" and Shaw's "In the end there is only thought."

Quite possibly, regard for the power of sentence-final position is what often leads writers to choose the passive. Consider the following from Dear Abby:

> 8. Not only does her beloved husband die a lingering death with cancer, she's spied upon by a nosy, suspicious, uncharitable neighbor.

This example shows how passives offer possibilities for using the powerful end-position of an English sentence. See how the colorful indignation of Abby fades in this active version: . . . a nosy, suspicious, uncharitable neighbor spies upon her.

Not that passives are always, under all circumstances, better than active sentences! (Unfortunately that is the message students often think they are getting from lessons on passive transformations.) On the other hand, it is equally misleading to assert that active sentences are always clearer and stronger than their passive counterparts, as gurus of "plain talk" frequently claim.

It appears that the passive serves a number of purposes. Obviously the passive is the option to use when one cannot or should not or need not state the agent. In such a sentence, with no agent expressed, attention is naturally focused on the action itself, and on its receiver.

But that is not the only purpose of the passive.

When the by-phrase passive is used, perhaps it is to provide variety, a passive counterpoint to a series of active sentences. Or the passive is chosen for its effect on sentence cadence; a more pleasing arrangement of syllables may result. Contexts needed for illustrating those reasons would be too lengthy for our present space.

The examples we have examined, however, suggest the following:

- -- Sometimes the active option is rejected because much needs to be said about the agent -- more than can comfortably fit before the verb. In a passive sentence, the agent (in post-verb by-phrase) can be treated at length.
- -- The writer may wish to delay stating the agent as long as possible. A by-phrase at the end of the sentence can serve this purpose.
- -- Like the inversion that characterizes periodic sentences, the shifting of agent to end-position in passives is a means of creating suspense.
- -- Since the end of a sentence is often marked by a pitch-change and strong stress, a writer may draw attention to the agent through use of the passive. The by-phrase is placed where the major stress falls.

Such points, among others, deserve to be mentioned when the purpose of the passive is discussed.

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A TECFORS Forum Reply

"STANDARDS" SECONDED

I would like to concur with what Regis Welch writes in her article on "Maintaining Professional Integrity" (TECFORS, Nov., 1981). Setting and consistently requiring high standards in composition classes for foreign students is necessary for the sake of the student, teacher, and institution. Evaluating student work in light of these standards, though, is not necessarily as subjective or lacking in guidelines as one might believe.

One of the first tasks, however, is to have the institution recognize that there is a need for consistent standards in composition classes. All too often, foreign students are placed in separate sections that have little relation to their "regular" section counterparts. This does not mean that there should not be separate sections -- they are important because they can provide teachers with the needed expertise to work with foreign students' writing, material suitable for foreign students, and the time and focus that the students require. But teachers from all sections should constantly communicate with each other and be consistent with how evaluating of writing is being done. This often requires EFL teachers to learn more of what good writing entails and to raise their standards, just as regular composition teachers might need to learn more of what the "Basic Writer", both foreign and native-speaker, has to cope with in learning formal English writing.

It is important to keep in mind in placing students in classes that there are different levels of student ability. Classes and placement into them should reflect this not so obvious fact. If a foreign student's English is riddled with grammatical, spelling, punctuation, or vocabulary errors, he or she should not be placed in the freshman composition course. This course should teach writing -- the presentation, organization, support and development of an idea. If what is taught is consistently sentence level material, then it is not a freshman composition course. A student in need of sentence level work should be placed in the appropriate remedial/ developmental course and kept there until the student can handle the greater demands of the freshman composition course. Without this procedure, the best intentions of the instructors and institution are for naught. If there are to be standards involved, and students cannot meet these standards, it is the school's and teacher's responsibility to see they get the required support that will enable them to meet these standards.

Another must is a grading instrument that is used by all teachers in all sections, in the same manner. This involves some time by the teachers, but is fairly easy to do. Such an instrument can be devised by individual institutions or one such as the Jacobs, et al, English Composition Ability Profiles (Newbury, 1981) can be used reliably with both native and non-native speakers.

The icing on the cake would be a university-wide competency requirement that would ensure that all students in all sections of a particular level composition course could write at a certain defined level of proficiency before they were granted credit for that level and moved onto the next level or out of the writing sequence. The holistic scoring system devised by ETS and used extensively throughout the country can be used by individual institutions, if the desire is present and personnel involved are willing to put in the extra effort.

My institution has incorporated all the above strategies. We have separate sections of writing for foreign students taught by qualified EFL instructors. We have initiated a developmental writing class for those students who still need sentence-level writing work. We grade throughout the semester on a standardized scoring sheet, and we have a competency exam that requires students to demonstrate a defined level of proficiency before they pass on to the next writing course.

At my request the foreign students sections were initiated into this system after two trial semesters. The best thing about it is that it works! Foreign students can be required to meet university standards in writing, and they can meet these requirements successfully and nearly in the same percentage as native-speakers. In the fall semester of 1980, 81% of the foreign students in the first semester composition course demonstrated the required proficiency (a score of 3.5 on a final essay - with a 2 low, 8 high grading scale) as compared to 84% of the native-speakers. This fall (1981) semester, 91% of the foreign students deomstrated proficiency at or above the 3.5 level (native-speaker percentage not known at this time). There are some slight attendant concerns, but more about these in a later issue. At this point I would just like to share with TECFORS readers that it is possible to require writing standards for foreign students, on a par with native speakers, and not be disappointed or frustrated with the results.

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VOCABULARY AND THE COLLEGE-BOUND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Part I: How Much

When EFL international students begin their first college course with American students and college-level textbooks, how much vocabulary should they have mastered previously or be able to recall upon seeing in context? What kind of vocabulary? What learning strategies and techniques should they have in order to be able to integrate new vocabulary effectively? Lastly, how can EFL instructors best prepare their students to meet the vocabulary challenge of the college text?

One of the difficulties in quantifying vocabulary is in putting a precise definition to the term. Words, lexical items, lexemes, dictionary entries, roots and affixes, phrases, idioms, and proverbs might all be considered as definitions or aspects of "vocabulary." Another difficulty is that of "words" (orthographic shapes) with multiple definitions. Is run one vocabulary entry or as many entries as it has parts of speech, major definitions, or shades of meaning--in the latter case counted at least 75 times? Are related items like relative, relationship and related distinct items in the way that wampum, catsup and phlegmatic are? Which are more difficult to learn?

Clearly the reality of vocabulary is not unidimensional; however the lack of a simplistic categorization must not disguise the reality that the number of vocabulary items is immense. It has been suggested that the college student in a four year course will encounter 70,000 to over 100,000 different non-technical vocabulary items. Many of our students leaving EFL programs who have difficulty with simplified materials written at the 5000-word level actually have a 25,000 item recognition vocabulary; in order to have mastered the 70,000 figure, these students would have to learn over 30 words per day over the next four years! From another perspective, the many international students who test out at the seventh or eighth grade level on the Nelson-Denny, Word Clues or other vocabulary tests have four or five years of vocabulary study to reach the college level of vocabulary.

The real question, though, is what percentage of these items the students need to be able to recall the meaning of upon seeing them in print and what percentage can either be understood for the first time due to the context or can be ignored as insignificant. With the decline of the grammar-translation method and

its cumbersome, inefficient use of the dictionary have come methodologies which avoid the numerical concern (audio-lingual) or place a heavy emphasis on learning in context (the psycho-linguistic guessing game). The latter approach, based on the high rate of correct guessing in Kenneth Goodman-style experiments, has been espoused by several ESL authors. Unfortunately for the "guessing hypothesis" theory, the experiments of Phillip Gough and associates demonstrate that when function words (of, and, the, etc.) are not included in the talleys, the ability of fluent native readers to guess items correctly in the Reader's Digest falls to chance. Consider, then, the difficulty facing the non-fluent EFL student guessing items in a college text.

Another argument made in favor of context leaning is that in the course of natural reading, multiple contacts with the vocabulary item will be sufficient for the student to understand its use. However, the reality facing the reader is once again a numerical issue; the non-technical words which the college international student is expected by the author of the text to know but doesn't are precisely those which appear highly infrequently in print, most likely two or fewer times in each million words of running print. It is these words, the substantives, that carry the greatest degree of meaning. In short, the reader encounters a large number of important items very few times each. If the reader needs to spend a significant amount of time on figuring out vocabulary items, the result will be a further slowing of an already insufficient reading speed and a concentration on vocabulary learning, rather than on knowledge and concept development which are to be the functions of the text. A further difficulty is that much of this new vocabulary load is likely to be concentrated in the first year of the EFL students' program, the so-called general requirement courses in the humanities and sciences coming at that time. What teacher of freshman non-native speakers has not witnessed the frustration of the student with the college-text? Simply stated, international students must master much non-technical vocabulary prior to beginning their college careers.

(Part II will look at learning processes.)

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USING INVENTION HEURISTICS TO TEACH WRITING

Part I: An Introdution to Heuristics

Invention heuristics are commonly thought of as techniques used to think productively about a subject, heuristics coming from a Greek word meaning "discovery" or "invention". They are used by writers as an aid in finding a subject or an angle from which to view the subject, for narrowing the scope of the discourse to fit within whatever limitations exist, and for choosing the best structure in which to develop one's thesis. Of course, all these aspects of invention are interrelated, since a topic often suggests a structure, and that structure -- say comparison/contrast -- in turn admits certain content by definition. A heuristic of any sort, whether it leads to analyzing a Shakespearean character or solving a physics problem, is a method which guides the individual through various approaches to thinking about the question at hand.

The purpose of heuristics may be seen as information retrieval, as they are mental processes which a writer can use to access facts, opinions, and perspectives on a given topic as they are stored in his or her experience. Brainstorming on a general topic such as "Vacations I'd Like to Take" or "ESL Writing Students' Problems" is an invention heuristic of this first type.

Other heuristic methods can lead the willing writer to conceptualize a subject in a way outside the writer's normal pattern. (This "normal" pattern may, by the way, be induced by teaching methods and not necessarily be "natural" or an indication of greater or lesser intelligence.) These heuristics can lead the writer to recognize less than obvious relationships among objects. For example, tagmemic invention, through asking certain questions, helps the writer view a subject as a static entity, as a process, as an isolated phenomenon, and as part of its universe.

On a third level, certain heuristics can affect the writer's conceptualization of the writing process. How a writing program is set up, the amount of time devoted to reading, discussion, pre-writing, sentence-level and discourse-level revision have some effect on how the writer views the composing process, though the writer may not actually be conscious of the effect. This last aspect of invention heuristics is perhaps the most important. Whether they are aware of it or not, composition teachers use heuristics when they teach writing. Students are told to think before they begin writing, to read over what they write as they work, to write a "good" topic sentence, and to follow it with examples and other support appropriate to their topics. Likewise, students themselves go through an invention process before and as they write. Some make lists, others draw diagrams, but the majority of

students just invent as they write, handing in this free-association as a first draft. In other words, our students do have an invention process--it is just unsystematic and to varying degrees, incomplete. The central question for the ESL writing class is how to teach students to express themselves using acceptable English rhetorical structure, and, at the same time, how to teach writing as a process, stemming first and foremost from content. My premise is that we can indeed attend to this second need -- the creative process -- through the medium of non-traditional invention heuristics.

Until quite recently, our methods and materials in ESL have assumed that our students are prepared to take their ideas and opinions, already developed in the first language, and organize them to conform to English rhetorical structure. Assuming that the obvious problem of translation and adaptation to unfamiliar rhetorical structure can be overcome, there is still some doubt that the student has something to write about, or has been trained to write coherently in his or her first language. ESL students need the same sort of guidance in terms of topic and the same or more extensive instruction in English rhetorical patterns than do native speakers. Also, rhetorical invention with ESL students is probably most useful if it concentrates on dealing with a given topic. Inventing an approach, not inventing a problem, should be the usual focus in teaching writing. The work of the student, aided by heuristics, is to plan, project, limit, structure, and choose from a wealth of ways to deal with a well-defined problem. Otherwise, the creative burden on the student to invent topic, situation, and audience is too great; in fact, it is truly artificial.

One rather obvious reason why ESL students have a difficult time writing acceptable arguments is that the foreign student has not lived in American society for very long. Unlike native speakers, who may be assumed to have acquired the essence of our discourse structure, they lack a lifetime of exposure to cultural information. One underlying assumption here is that proximity or similarity of cultural discourse patterns contributes to the ability of individuals to understand one another. Likewise, a great dissimilarity in discourse patterns means that the second language student needs to be taught what rhetorical structure is expected, and what options are available to examine a given topic and present a point. It seems to this author that time spend exploring the topic through invention heuristics will produce depth and more culturally acceptable logic in writing, while beginning with rhetorical structure should produce less variation in terms of content and more formulaic results from foreign students.

There is no easy answer to the question of how writing can best be taught to college students who are non-native speakers of English. Nor is there only one answer. It is, however, possible for ESL instructors to choose a satisfactory combination of their experience, theories and methods, and the models and practices that have been used in teaching English rhetoric to native speakers. Clearly, there are differences between the kinds of knowledge and experience that native and non-native speakers bring to the writing task. This is why we cannot use all of the same strategies and materials. But it seems to me that current models of the composing process and certain heuristics used with native-speaking college freshmen have potential for the ESL classroom. After reading literature in both fields and working with both groups of students and instructors, I concluded that our goals are in fact quite similar, and our means, while not synonymous, need not develop exclusively.

The next article in this three-part series will describe several invention heuristics which can be used for pre-writing activities in ESL composition classes.

Bibliography for "An Introduction to Heuristics"
(Each article in the series will be followed by a short bibliography. The following sources are good background reading on heuristics, the reading/writing processes, and the notion of cultural differences in rhetoric and thought processes -- something at the very heart of why we need to make pre-writing through heuristics basic to ESL composition instruction.)

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VOCABULARY AND THE COLLEGE-BOUND EFL STUDENT:

LEARNING THEORY AND THE ACQUISITION OF VOCABULARY

In the first article of this three-part series I emphasized the need for the EFL student to master a tremendous amount of vocabulary prior to beginning a full college course-load. This article will discuss areas of research with present or potential relation to the vocabulary learning task, within a broad pedagogically-based framework.

Prior to exploring such a framework, we must put in their proper place the generalities and buzz words concerning the organ perceived at the center of learning: the brain. Right-left hemispheres, holistic vs. analytic, the reptilian brain, learning centers, black boxes, information processor, hypothesis testing, a super computer. These are not separate items. The points we must keep in mind are two: the brain is not separate from the rest of the body; and not a single language act or signal entering the brain can be traced to an ultimate output. We have much factual information -- neural transmission speeds, eye movement

locations plotted every millisecond, word-recognition speeds in numerous environments, short-term memory capacity, and more. Researchers have some control over input, observe output, and extrapolate what goes on in between. The boxes, stages, processing units and learning centers are essentially metaphoric and hypothetical in nature and necessary for exploratory purposes. The brain is, as it was in Aristotle's time, still a metaphor.

Since the uncertainty of the beast has spawned many approaches to explain learning, it is necessary to use a framework broad enough to include the relevant areas of research. What is often the jumping-off point for the understanding of vocabulary -- the concept of word or definition -- is too heavily and too narrowly cognitive. A much better starting point would be the commonly called "domains of learning" -- the psychomotor, the cognitive and the affective. Much pedagogical research falls neatly into one of these categories, and the fact that they are not exclusive but rather present emphases (cognition, for example, enters into all three domains) reflects the reality of interaction. Psycho-motor activities are those involving movement as well as thought, such as driving; cognitive emphasize comprehension, analysis and synthesis, while affective are emotional-attitudinal in focus.

The first domain, the psychomotor, has been the least explored area in relation to language learning; yet kinesthetic approaches to second language learning (acting out what one is saying), situational reinforcement where activities are observed, or subtle body movements during dialogues are common. To what extent is vocabulary learning, even at advanced levels with much abstract input, enhanced by connecting the learning process to activity? This is the question the psychomotor domain must trigger; analogies or examples such as driving, putting together a model, or acting out a role, along with the language involved, can serve as models for program development.

The second domain, the cognitive is the most heavily researched: linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, educational psychology, reading -- each area has contributed findings with relevance to vocabulary development. To obtain a sufficently broad perspective, one needs to consider at least the areas of 1) concept of word and definition; 2) memory; 3) recall; 4) relationships within the text (e.g., propositions and text hierarchies); 5) relationships of stored knowledge to the text (schema-text interaction); 6) subconscious/conscious levels of learning and 8) the effect of the first language on the foreign language.

The questions of what a word is, how it is defined and how it relates to other "words" confront any teacher presenting a vocabulary lesson; the more words, the greater the need for efficiency. Unfortunately we do not know the way in which the brain processes or matches a given word. Does the brain match visual, semantic or phonetic features of a word, go to a template inprint, or use certain combinations for matching? Word recognition research alone is in too great a flux to offer useful learning input, which is why it is necessary to consider the other areas.

Research in memory (actually getting an item into memory) and recall (bring the item out of memory) can and will continue to offer many insights. The concepts of immediate, short-term and long-term memory suggest considerations for the vocabulary-learning process. Immediate memory presumably holds all of the input of a few milliseconds. Short-term memory is the vocabulary bottleneck; its capacity is only four to seven unrelated items, and only these items can be transferred to the permanent storage of long-term memory. Rehearsal improves transfer; similar material processed at the same time is likely to interfere. Research on memory gives us a time for short-term storage (12-20 seconds maximum) and thus for a vocabulary task and suggests two basic considerations: how we can relate

items entering the short term memory, and how we can develop rehearsal techniques to enhance transfer while avoiding interference within the 12 to 20 second timespan.

Recall is the other side of memory. When we have the item learned, how do we recall it when we need it? How do we avoid mental blocks? We know that the first and last items of a list are recalled most easily. Items learned early may interfere with those learned later (proactive interference) or the reverse (retroactive interference).

Memory and recall as constructs reflect the major needs in vocabulary learning -- determine the appropriate amount of time to learn vocabulary, planning proper rehearsal techniques, establishing relations, and avoiding interference. Research in text analysis indicates that concepts more significant to understanding are more likely to be recalled; is the same true for vocabulary items? The refinements in analyzing idea relationships (propositions) within a text suggests that vocabulary items placed in similar relationships might be more likely to be learned and remembered. Research in schema (schemata, scripts) has established the importance of background knowledge, including cultural background in understanding and recalling texts correctly; research should be able to determine generally effective ways of tying vocabulary to be learned to the learner's experiences. One point of view proposes two kinds of memory, a relational memory and an episodic memory; it seems worthwhile to tie vocabulary in a logical manner to already known episodes and relationships.

The issue of subconscious vs. conscious learning is concerned with learning capacity and efficiency as well as style. If we can determine the parameters of the subconscious, we may begin to understand whether there are ways to short-circuit or enhance short-term memory. Do or can certain presentation styles increase learning even when students are not making a conscious effort to learn?

The final area, second foreign language acquistion, reflects most directly the process we are concerned with: the aid or interference of the first language learning experience directing the acquisition of the second. Concerning vocabulary, in what ways does a first language background in an area of learning affect the learning of a foreign language vocabulary in the same area? How may cognates promote or inhibit vocabulary development?

This article has discussed two domains, the psychomotor and the cognitive. The remaining domain, the affective, focuses on emotional (attitudinal, motivational) issues. As in the area of the psychomotor, research in the relationship of the affective to vocabulary learning is severely limited. Yet affective factors may be the major cause of poor performance for those with a normal I.Q. The uninterested, the insecure, the tired, the uninvolved, the young, the old, perhaps all but the very few self-actualized learners may fall within this category. Affective research is not conclusive as to whether those who learn better do so because they are task-oriented (instrumental) or empathetic; but factors inhibitive to learning have been well documented. Approaches to vocabulary learning that claim to be particularly successful may be so because of environmental and attitudinal inputs, which need to be considered in judging research or developing a curriculum.

To summarize: The purpose of this article has been to offer a framework for judging research in vocabulary learning and actualizing vocabulary development programs. The final article will outline a program for vocabulary development.

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READING COURSES IN CHINESE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

The most widely-taught English courses in Chinese institutes and universities are "extensive" and "intensive" reading. "Extensive" can be variously defined -- and is, when the courses are taught. But "intensive" seems to mean the same thing everywhere. I will attempt to describe this type of class here.

The approaches used in the intensive reading classes seeem to mix Grammar-Translation with Audio-Lingual; the grammar explained is both traditional and structural. From the Grammar-Translation Approach, the following techniques are taken: translation of key words and sentences, memorization of vocabulary lists, discussion of the grammar in the native language, and treatment of the language as dead -- an object for study rather than a tool for communication. The Audio-Lingual Approach is less evident in most texts: there are repetition and some transformation drills (e.g.,"Make these sentences interrogative.") following the translation. The drills are to be subordinated, in the lessons, to the translation, grammatical analysis (e.g., finding subjects, verbs, attributive classes) and word study. Also from the Audio-Lingual are sentence-pattern boxes of the type that appeared in the early Charles Fries texts, from which students can select alternate items (e.g., one of a group of verbs, "there is" plus a subject.).

In addition to these exercises, there are sometimes discussions (in Chinese) of alternate meanings for words and examples for use (e.g., mean; What does the word "cell" mean? What do you mean by doing so? You mean to come tomorrow? I mean you no harm. He was meant for a doctor.). There are also true and false and comprehension questions which test the facts of the text. A dialogue also appears, but, like many dialogues that are found in ESL texts, it doesn't resemble human speech. Sentences are complete and in academic register; there are no partial sentences, rephrasings or filler words (e.g., "uh").

If Chinese students are to spend their lives translating texts -- and much of this is done in China -- then it seems to me that the emphasis upon translation and full understanding of the text is a good one.

Perhaps more modern explanations of grammar (in some texts, "John was hit" still identifies John as subject) and more careful selection of vocabulary might be useful, and dialogues might be omitted. On the other hand, if the goal is to read texts, then other types of exercises, making use of Kenneth Goodman's and Frank Smith's insights might be in order.

We have introduced Reader's Choice (University of Michigan) and a number of exercises which strengthen the reader's predictive abilities to our teacher trainees, hoping that they will find something useful for their classes. We are also attempting to make clear some differences between reading, translation and grammatical analysis.

If any of the TECFORS readers have suggestions or articles about reading which they have found to be particularly convincing for the hesitant teacher, we would very much appreciate receiving them.

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HOLISTIC SCORING OF ESSAYS

At my institution foreign students and Americans are graded on the same standards (blind scoring) for the English Departmental Essay by the holistic scoring method (see TECFORS, January 1982: "Viewpoint"). This article relates the procedure of reading and grading those essays, and draws extensively from a manual available to all students and faculty (Perron, 1980).

The manual explains that the English Departmental Essay is to demonstrate a student's ability to write expository or transactional prose that follows the requirements of standard written English. The students write on the same topic at the same time within a ninety-minute period.

Those evaluating the essays are to take into account as a whole each essay's ideas, originality, accuracy of information, organization (unity, structure, coherence, logic, emphasis), development, syntax, fluency, style, and control of the conventions of written English. That is, the essay is scored on the basis of the total impression it makes on the reader. This is what is meant by holistic scoring. The various factors that make up a piece of writing are not judged separately. All qualities of the essay are assessed at once, and, in general, every effort is made to reward the writer for what has been done well. Everything that is part of the writing -- the spelling, the words used, the organization, the coherence and logical consistency of the line of reasoning, the accuracy of information, the punctuation, the sentence structure, and the rest -- contributes to the impression the reader forms of the written work and, therefore, to the evaluation the reader makes of that writing.

Immediately before a grading session begins, the readers assemble to read, score, and discuss sample essays from a previous administration of the English Departmental Essay. The purpose of this procedure is threefold: to instruct the readers about how the scoring system works, to establish the standards for the scoring session by group consensus, and to make sure that all readers assign scores in a manner consistent with these standards and with one another.

Once the scoring session begins, readers only assign a score to an essay. They do not mark or comment on the essays they read. Consequently, a large number of essays can be read and scored in a relatively short period of time. Periodically during a scoring session, readers score and discuss other sample essays so that the group of readers maintains consistency in scoring.

Every effort is made to obtain impartial scoring of the essays. Students' names do not appear on their Blue Books; teachers do not read their own students' papers; and an essay's final score is the average of the scores assigned, independently, by two readers -- provided that these scores are identical or differ by no more than one point. In cases of disagreement, the essay is routed to one of the assistant chief readers for a third independent reading (the two previous scores are withheld). Ordinarily, by the third reading, the essay will have received two scores that are identical or that differ by nor more than one point. The assistant chief reader then determines the essay's final score, and the variant score is discarded.

Essays are scored according to a 2 (low) to 8 (high) scale. The scores may be interpreted as follows:

8 = highest score; upper range of the upper half; best writing one is likely to find in the sample; addresses the subject, well-organized, -developed, and -expressed

7 = middle range of the upper half; addresses the subject appropriately and well-written; some "careless errors" may be present

6 = lower range of the upper half; good writing, but not distinguished; some lapses in treatment of the subject, organization, development, emphasis, expression, or conventions may be noted

5 = middle range; the "average" essay, neither particularly good nor particularly deficient

4 = upper range of the lower half; addresses the subject more or less appropriately, but weaknesses in organization, development, specificity, fluency, or control of conventions impair essay effectiveness

3 = middle range of the lower half; essay contains serious deficiencies

2 = lowest score; lower range of the lower half; addresses the subject but poorly organized or poorly written; or close to non-responsive to the assignment

0 = essay not related to assignment; only chief reader may assign this score

In the May 1981 reading session, there were 644 essays to be read by 24 readers (drawn from all areas of the university, including faculty, staff, and administration). Average reading time per essay was 2 minutes and 55 seconds. 510 (79%) of the essays were read by 2 readers; 134 (21%) were read by 3 readers.

Below is the schedule for the December 16, 1981 reading session:

8:30 a.m.	Convene	
9:00-10:10	Training Session I	70 minutes
10:10-10:40	Reading Session I	30 minutes
10:40-10:50	Break	10 minutes
10:50-11:25	Reading Session II	35 minutes
11:25-11:30	Stretch	05 minutes
11:30-11:40	Training Session II	10 minutes
11:40-12:10	Reading Session III	30 minutes
12:10-1:00	Lunch	50 minutes
1:00-1:25	Training Session III	20 minutes
1:25-2:00	Reading Session IV	35 minutes
2:00-2:10	Break	10 minutes
2:10-2:40	Reading Session V	30 minutes

At St. Edward's University we have found that when essays by foreign students and American students are scored holistically at the same grading session, the success rate at demonstrating the required proficiency can be virtually the same for native and non-native English speakers. Such a result shows that not only can the grading system work but also that the composition section for international students can meet the standards of those for American students, a goal clearly beneficial for the students, the teachers, and the instutitions.

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A NEW M.A. PROGRAM

Providing an opportunity to gain a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics while teaching international students, the University of Southern California has announced a new M.A. program jointly sponsored by The American Language Institute and the Department of Linguistics for those seeking careers in second language teaching.

Courses in the program include the following: Structure of English, Structure of Language, Second Language Learning and Teaching, Applied Linguistics in Course Design and Materials Preparation, Sociolinguistic Aspects of Second Language Acquisition, Psycholinguistic Aspects of Second Language Acquisition, and Experimental Methods in Applied Linguistics. Most students are expected to complete the M.A. in two years if they are also graduate teaching assistants.

Joint American Language Institute and Department of Linguistics faculty are: Eugene J. Briere, Fraida Dubin, David D. Eskey, Robert B. Kaplan, Stephen D. Krashen, William E. Rutherford, and Jacquelyn Schachter.

Graduate assistantships in The American Language Institute offer a stipend and full tuition remission. For assistantship information, write: Director, American Language Institute, JEF 245, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90007. For program information, write: Coordinator, Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics, Department of Linguistics, GFS 301, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90007.

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Send subscription requests ($3.00 per year, $5.50 international) to Nancy Y. Lee at her address below. Manuscripts and correspondence may be sent either to her or to Kerry Segel. Manuscripts should be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed.

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

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USING INVENTION HEURISTICS TO TEACH WRITING

Part II: A Look at the Methods

To restate a definition from the first article in this three-part series, an invention heuristic is a procedure, which can be taught and practiced, for thinking about a general topic or a specific problem. The main object of this second article is to give the reader an idea of what several invention heuristics look like and to suggest some of their applications. If a composition curriculum does not make use of invention heuristics or include extended discussions from which topics are generated (a kind of pre-writing activity which acts as a group version of invention), probably the main pre-writing activity is outlining. While it is a planning activity, outlining is not, however, invention, and the distinction is important. Some invention heuristics, when depicted visually, may look like mere organizers of content, but they are also procurers of information and insight. Heuristics serve not only to help the writer separate the whole from its parts, but to find the parts and to grasp the particularly interesting ones.

The invention heuristics examined here fall into several categories, the first being a "free-thinking" approach. Group brainstorming, a heuristic of this type, is useful for topic invention when the writer is given a general topic and wishes to inventory his knowledge in order to find a specific subject on which he has authority to write. Robert Kaplan has refined this technique in his class theme exercise described in The Anatomy of Rhetoric (1972). In this several-hour procedure, the class first decides on a general topic, which must be inherently interesting to the majority of the class and limited sufficiently to be dealt with in a short paper. The class then discusses its purpose in writing a paper on the topic and the intended audience. Next, students contribute facts related to the topic and arrange them together in a hierarchical fashion. An important effect of brainstorming as a pre-writing activity is that it shows students the immense amount of facts they do possess on certain subjects. Another positive effect is the high level of class participation that usually accompanies this exercise. While a student's success is somewhat dependent on serious cooperation among the entire class, this invention heuristic is also used by individuals. Most writers have the custom of writing lists of notions or facts about a subject when they are preparing to write.

From classwide brainstorming, which may indeed be the best pre-writing technique to begin with, students need to move to an individual effort. This is not a matter of choice, of course, when it is time to devise one's thesis statement. Also, the sort of problem definition carried out in brainstorming is not necessary when the topic is a specific one. Expanding of the free-writing concept in Peter Elbow's Writing Without Teachers (1973), Gregory and Elizabeth Cowan developed a heuristic which they call looping. Looping is like brainstorming, but different in that students focus on a specific idea and work with it intensively. In looping, the writer is given a topic and engages in non-stop, no corrections allowed free-writing "loops". The rules for looping are as follows: 1) Write non-stop for X minutes. Do not take your pencil or pen off the page. Draw circles or squiggles if you must, but keep the pen moving. 2) Make no corrections. At the end of each three to ten-minute loop, the writer pauses and summarizes his main idea or "center of gravity" and records it. If in a class, students voluntarily share their summary statements. What students often find is that one loop is much better than another, and that a central idea does emerge. Normally a

session has three loops. In class, time may be given for the students to examine what they have written, re-arrange and add material, and write outlines.

Looping has several advantages as a pre-writing activity. It builds some discipline into the writing process of procrastinators who hand in papers that are obviously results of whatever comes to mind. It also legitimizes such free-writing as one step in the writing process. It is rare, of course, that language comes out during brainstorming in the desired order for a finished composition, and so it is with looping. Both activities require the writer to re-read, re-think, and re-arrange. Yet what looping requires, and brainstorming does not, is the production of full assertations, of topics and comments rather than just topics.

Another heuristic, the tagmemic nine-frame, helps the writer add depth to his ideas by specifically looking at the environment and evolution of a subject, since every subject is seen as static as well as dynamic. According to tagmemics, one really understands something when three aspects of it are known: 1) how the thing differs from others like itself, 2) how much the thing can change and still be a member of its class, and 3) how it fits into a larger system. The thing itself may also be viewed in three ways: 1) as a discrete entity, 2) as a dynamic, changing entity, and 3) as a complex system itself. Together, these six variables yield nine possible combinations, the nine frames. As an alternative to the complexity of this otherwise powerful heuristic, Charles Kneupper (1980) proposed reducing the heuristic to six frames, a form I have found workable. Many ESL students tend to write classification/description papers even when thesis (assertion) writing has been discussed in class and a persuasive topic has been assigned. This behavior may occur because the student is not accustomed to expressing his own opinions freely in a school environment. Others have pointed out that the student may indeed be writing for an audience--himself. This student imagines no reader but himself and thus has nothing to say that his "reader" does not already know. Whatever the cause, tagmemic invention can be very helpful in getting such students to deal with subjects in greater depth. When they discuss the heuristic, they realize that peers who write "good" papers do just this: rather than merely describe something, they analyze it and relate it to a larger phenonmenon.

SIX-FRAME TAGMEMIC HEURISTIC

	The topic IN CONTRAST	The topic viewed AS A SYSTEM	The topic viewed IN A LARGER SYSTEM
STATIC VIEWPOINT -Description-	What feature(s) serve to differentiate the unit from other similar things?	What are the components of the unit? What is the structure of the system?	What are the other components in the larger system?
DYNAMIC VIEWPOINT -Changing Process-	What process of change occurred to create the unit? How is it changing currently? What will happen to it in the future? What features serve to differentiate the unit from similar processes, objects, or events?	How were the parts formed? What will happen to each in the future? Do different parts change at different rates? What does change in a particular part to do the overall system? How is the structure of the system changing?	How was the larger system created? How is it currently changing? What will happen to it in the future? How does change in the larger system affect the smaller system? How is the structure of the larger system changing?

(Adapted from Kneupper 1980.)

In part three, additional heuristic methods will be discussed. In addition, a role for invention within the traditionally structured college ESL class will be suggested.

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(Please also refer to the bibliography for Part I in TECFORS March 1982.)

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VOCABULARY AND THE COLLEGE-BOUND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Part III: Setting Up A Program

The first part of this series outlined vocabulary-related difficulties faced by college-bound EFL students, while the second looked at research-derived learning constructs central to the vocabulary learning/instructional process. This final segment will provide a model for the establishment of an advanced-level EFL vocabulary component.

Prior to the development of this vocabulary component, its rationale and fundamental principles must be reviewed. A large amount of non-technical vocabulary unknown to advanced-level EFL students is assumed by authors of college texts to be within the realm of common knowledge and thus not to require clarification by explanation or through context. Rarely does this vocabulary (new to EFL students) appear often enough in natural, supportive context to be mastered in a reasonable amount of time. Therefore, multiple strategies need to be used for efficient learning and recall. Mastery requires distributed and regular practice in varied presentation formats. Activities which sustain interest, include new and useful knowledge, and emphasize a great degree of cognitive processing of text are key to developing vocabulary mastery.

The first step in the development of the vocabulary component is the establishment of an appropriate vocabulary bank. In gathering vocabulary for the bank, follow this general guide for inclusion of an item: its common use in informational prose. The emphasis should be on single-word entries; however, useful phrases, idioms, abbreviations and acronyms are legitimate categories. Consider not only nouns, active verbs and modifiers, but also stative verbs (e.g., presuppose, apply to, concern), adverbial connectives (indeed, nevertheless), and prepositional phrases. Include useful cognates and words subject to affix and root meaning analysis, especially those whose Latin and Greek word parts offer substantial clues to overall word meaning. Choose vocabulary that will span the needs of the entire advanced-level student population.

For sources of vocabulary, refer to vocabulary texts (for native or nonnative speakers), books of idioms, word lists, and high school and college-level readings. Vocabulary texts, which have the advantages of limited vocabulary and assigned grade range, supplemented by idioms texts, are the major sources; word lists and informational prose texts can be used to double-check or round out the lists.

A necessary part of the collection process is the gathering of items under one of three categories: core, peripheral, and extending. Core items are those basic to any informational prose. (Expected student mastery level should be high--80% in isolation and 90% in context.) These are almost all single word items spanning the fourth to eighth grade levels. At least 700 core items should be available for a one-semester vocabulary component.

Peripheral items are less crucial to general understanding. Although nontechnical, they are more likely to be identified with certain subject areas. Cognates and phrases are important in this category, to challenge the more proficient student. (Lower isolation mastery would be expected, perhaps 50%, with 80% to 90% in mildly supportive context expected of the better student.) These items will most likely be in the eighth to tenth grade levels. Four hundred periphery items should be entered in the word bank.

The extending vocabulary will be used to develop word attack skills, in isolation or supportive context. Vocabulary found in college texts lending itself to analysis, i.e., cognates, words containing useful Latin or Greek word parts, and acronyms and abbreviations are central to this category. Mastery of the ability to use context clues and word parts, rather than the individual items, should be stressed. Process mastery should be tested in mildly supportive context. Two hundred extending items should be available for use.

Along with developing a vocabulary bank, you need to prepare a subject bank. Under the general headings of sociology, psychology, government, history, biology, chemistry, physics, education, communication, engineering and business collect a list of the sources of intriguing, useful and challenging non-technical passages. Enter at least three sources in each category.

The organization of the vocabulary and subject banks is designed to mesh with the organization of the model vocabulary component, which is divided into weekly units. Each unit focuses on two subject bank categories and one vocabulary mastery "lecture." For each subject area choose five one-hundred-word passages, each passage containing five new vocabulary bank items--core or peripheral. Introduce extending items in the lecture. Use items that are introduced in one lesson in subsequent units wherever feasible. Test both information and vocabulary for mastery, with pre and post tests and practice exercises throughout each unit. After every fourth unit give a cumulative mastery exam. (The testing format will vary according to the type of mastery expected.)

The sequence of activities within each unit must be consistent. The unit should open with a five-sentence true/false pretest, each sentence containing information and bank vocabulary related to one of the five passages in the first subject area; this pretest would serve as an advanced organizer. Follow the pretest with the first group of five passages. After each passage give two comprehension questions calling for the processing of the entire passage ("contrast the ...", "Why did the writer state ...", "Give the three factors ...", etc.), and self-checking vocabulary exercises to guide the student to the meaning of the key vocabulary items. These exercises could take the form of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank or dictionary entry formats. At the end of the set of five passages give vocabulary practice exercises reviewing all five passages. Repeat this same sequence for the second set of readings.

The next part of the unit is a word and context analysis section. Following a pretest similar to the previous two give the students a reading or "lecture" of under five hundred words on an aspect of: 1), word analysis skills; 2), using context clues; or 3), vocabulary learning and retention. Unlike the two previous sets of readings which contain new core and periphery items, the lecture utilizes extending vocabulary as new items to demonstrate the process under consideration, incorporating previously studied items of any category into the body of the presentation. Following the lecture, present questions requiring recall of information presented and practice exercises involving extending vocabulary to test the mastery of the process described.

This vocabulary component is designed to develop the student's mastery of a relatively large number of essential vocabulary items (over 500 in a semester), prepare the student to use multiple approaches to comprehend and retain vocabulary, and receive practice within a subject matter frame of intensive readings mirroring those the student is likely to encounter in college informational prose. It is suitable for use even by a class with a five-year span of vocabulary proficiency (fifth to tenth grade levels); however, a shift in the range for each category of vocabulary bank items can alter that range. The model suggests a broad range of subject matter; once again, adaptations to the model could be made to limit subject areas or include other genres such as the literary.

It is also important to realize that this model is adaptable to various time frames, alone or in conjunction with other course presentations. Much of the work in each unit can most likely be done without immediate teacher supervision; post-tests would be most effective if completed on a delayed recall basis.

In sum, this article has presented a model for the development of an advanced EFL vocabulary component that would insure mastery of a substantial amount of vocabulary and be compatible with many curriculum plans. If the complexities of the program preclude your current implementation of this model, use it in the same spirit that motivated this three-part series--as a vehicle for refining your thinking of the vocabulary learning process and methods of vocabulary presentation.

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TWO NEW TEXTBOOKS REVIEWED

The Process of Composition by Joy M. Reid
(Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982)

The Process of Composition is a delightful new addition to a growing list of composition texts designed specifically for the ESL student. Though the author states that it is intended for use with advanced ESL classes, it could also be used effectively with upper intermediate levels.

Although many of the techniques and skills emphasized in the text seem basic to all good written English, the focus is on university writing skills, with academic-track adult students in mind. It is the author's belief that "In order to function with professors and U. S. students, ESL students in advanced writing must understand the importance of written English and the necessity of individual commitment to learning the (necessary and acceptable) skills." Assignments throughout the text require students to make their writing "personally relevant" by: (1) writing about topics with which they are familiar and (2) writing with a particular audience in mind.

There is no emphasis on controlled writing per se; rather, students are encouraged to think about and develop their own ideas. However, they are taught to write according to a highly prescribed formula and format. Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence, followed by four to eight supporting statements that explain, define, clarify or illustrate the topic sentence. Both the introduction and conclusion have specific forms and techniques from which the students must choose. This same formula applies to essays and research papers, though in modified (expanded) form. It is intended that the ESL student will master at least one method of writing which will be acceptable to the majority of university professors when he is required to produce written essays and term papers for a course grade.

The text consists of three major sections, each with a different writing focus and goal. Each part builds upon the preceding for the necessary skills and information to understand and deal with the new material presented.

The first four chapters review the patterns of basic paragraph organization and development: choosing a topic, writing the topic sentence, supporting statements and conclusions. Much emphasis is placed on the important distinction between general and specific ideas and the manner in which these relate to good paragraph development. The focal part of this section deals with the "point paragraph" in terms of general statements (topic and concluding sentences) and the levels of specificity involved in the support of these. Both this and the following chapters provide ample practice in writing paragraphs, using various techniques of support and methods of development.

Chapters 5 to 9 apply what the student has learned to the writing of essays. First, the student is instructed in the various pre-writing strategies (selection of topic and method of development, writing the thesis statement, etc.); then he is taught to organize and write the different parts of the essay (introduction, body and conclusion); he is also taught additional expansion skills for writing the essay (introduction and concluding techniques and coherence techniques, both overall and within the inner paragraphs). In this section, the student also learns to write summaries and abstracts of articles, as well as argumentation strategies and analyses.

Finally, the last major section of the text deals with the research paper. The student is carefully guided through the various stages (planning and organization, research and writing). As part of this process, he is taught essential library research skills (to use the various reference sources, to do a computer search, journal indexing and abstracting, etc.) as well as basic documentation procedures (footnoting, referencing and writing bibliographies). The author even includes a short but valuable section on plagarism.

A final chapter is devoted to grammatical explanations and exercises. However, the author limits herself to a brief review of those grammar problems which are "specifically related to writing": verb tense agreement, passive voice, punctuation, sentence structure, etc. These are included in a separate section so that they can be used as class needs dictate and are not intended as a complete or intensive treatment of grammar. The stated goal is to have the students write as much as possible, not to spend time in learning the rules. Grammar points are to be dealt with chiefly as they arise in the students' written production.

The organization, sequencing and continuity of the various sections, chapters and exercises of this text are superb. Explanations and examples are clear and concise; and, in almost every section, one or more student writing samples are included, prior to the practice exercises(s). These are written in language which the student can understand and identify with; moreover, they are presented in a form which can be easily imitated. Students are usually required to work with these samples in some written form, either by outlining or by imitating them in their own writing. Additionally, the various units are replete with illustrative visual displays (charts and outlines); these should prove extremely useful to the ESL student, who is attempting to incorporate new rhetorical styles, techniques and formats into his previously-formed writing skills. Teachers are encouraged to supplement and adapt exercises to meet individual/class needs.

I would highly recommend this text for use in ESL programs whose primary function is the training of students with academic goals. I would especially recommend it for the teacher who wants to involve his students actively in the production of written English. I agree wholeheartedly with the author that "composition students in general, and ESL students in particular, need to spend more time practicing writing than reading about theories of writing." That is precisely what I envision taking place if one adheres to the text materials, which are presented in a concise, outline form, more in the manner of a workbook than a text. Within the structured format presented, students are encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and ideas and to produce a piece of writing which would be acceptable in most academic settings.

by Tom Kitchens
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Time and Space: A Basic Reader by Michael Connelly and Jean Sims

(Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982)

Time and Space is best described as a text of sixteen reading units (they are not labeled as such). Each unit contains one main, simplified reading, preceeded by topic-setting questions for discussion and followed by extending-discussion questions, a vocabulary in context exercise, and two groups of comprehension exercises--short answer to test text-implicit and -explicit knowledge, and a true-false comprehension check. Immediately following these exercises is a timed reading on a topic related to that of the main selection--the students recording their times on a graph in an appendix. Then come three "reading skills" exercises that provide practice in scanning, discriminating the idea, and using context to discover meaning. Finally the student is to reread the timed reading and record the second speed on a second graph.

I opened with the above description to demonstrate the complexity of this text--at once reflecting the complexity of the reading process and the problems in developing such a text. The authors follow several accepted axioms of learning-to-read theory: related readings on a single subject; distributed and varied practice utilizing listening, reading, speaking and writing modes; "speeding" and rereading to develop fluency; and a careful sequencing of activities that reflect the authors' understanding of the need for mastery of both process and product. Such efforts set this text apart from most others in the field.

Complexity in text must be compensated by a simplifying organization and guide, and in this regard the text is seriously flawed. Units are not numbered--does this mean the order in which they are studied makes no difference? The largest headings are used for both main reading and timed reading, giving the appearance of thirty-two distinct sections. The location of exercises is not listed in the table of contents, nor are they numbered. It's hard to find one's way around in this book.

Another complexity is the issue of time. Nowhere in the introduction or prior to the sections of the text are recommended times to spend. Discussion questions, in particular, can easily take up time better spent in silent reading. Most certainly this text needs a time management system.

Another question left unanswered is the role of the 77 photographs and drawings. Each one is accompanied by a brief caption and "courtesy of ..." statement but nothing more. Are they to be used in a preview of the reading? Why not accompany them with questions to stimulate prediscussion, or have students relate them to the text? It also seems likely that the abundance of figures is potentially distracting to the reader who is to be developing print fluency and deriving meaning from print.

I have concerns about the interest level of the subject matter. The authors claim that the readings are "adult-level" and for "university-bound" students; yet the sources listed in "Bibliography #1" are mainly the "The first of ..." or the "All about ..." children's series. Challenging subject matter in method-following or problem-solving readings, the kind that force greatest attention to text-implicit or text-explicit knowledge, would be highly preferable.

The concerns I have expressed are cautions to potential users of Time and Space, and not a suggested rejection of it. The philosophical and psychological underpinnings are strong and their operationalization in type and sequence of exercises is fine. The text is as useful as a structured discussion text as a reader, and titling it "... A Basic Discussion Reader" would give a more appropriate description of its potential. Younger EFL readers should certainly be considered part of its potential audience.

I believe Time and Space: A Basic Reader can serve a useful role in an EFL program; however, thorough familarity with the text format and a carefully thought-out time schedule and order of unit presentation should precede the introduction of this text into any program.

by Kerry Segel
The University of Texas at Austin

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Send subscription requests ($3.00 per year, $5.50 international) to Nancy V. Lee at her address below. Manuscripts and correspondence may be sent either to her or to Kerry Segel. Manuscripts should be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed.

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

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MAKING THE NEED TO WRITE SEEM REAL

Gregory Clark
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Nearly any organized language learning is handicapped by the inherent artificiality of an instructional context. In a classroom skills of communication are practiced without reference to any real communication need or goal. In the ESL composition classroom, especially at the college level where students are expected to develop skills of exposition required for academic work, that artificial context can result in students placing a goal of conformity to rules and conventions where a communication goal should be, leaving them with nothing to say (Rose 1980:394).

A review of the classical documents of rhetoric (Plato's The Phaedrus and Aristotle's The Rhetoric) reminds us that the act of writing never exists in isolation. Exposition always responds to a situation which provokes it and, in turn, is created to provoke a response in an audience who can affect that situation. It follows that writing instruction attempting to provide students with skills applicable to real communication must occur within a situational context that provides a need for exposition and an audience to receive it. Writing instruction that is not centered in such a context is artificial and, therefore, distorted.

Prevailing pedagogies for freshman composition instruction to native speakers are fundamentally artificial. One approach, emphasizing conformity of the product to conventional patterns and forms, counters another, concerned largely with the creative process of finding something to say prior to the writing. But both set goals for students that are tangential to communication itself by isolating from communication activities that cannot exist in isolation. Writers rarely write with content as a secondary concern; writers rarely need to search for a topic when a communication need exists. Perhaps it is the lack of a need to communicate and an emphasis on secondary activities rather than the primary purpose of communication that leaves so many ESL students discouraged and confused when such pedagogies are used.

In 1968, Lloyd Bitzer responded to this problem by describing the context of real communication, which he termed the rhetorical situation. "Rhetorical discourse," he wrote, "comes into existence as a response to a situation in the same sense that an answer comes into existence in response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem" (6). Bitzer developed a gloss on classical rhetoric in his analysis of the elements of a rhetorical situation as exigence, the subject, topic, or problem; audience, persons whose perceptions of the exigence need to be modified; and constraints, inherent realities placing limits upon the communication (7).

In 1980, Flower and Hayes extended Bitzer's model by adding a fourth element: writer's goals. They stated that writers set specific goals regarding how they want to affect and be perceived by their audiences, and how they want to build meaning and form in their final documents. For Flower and Hayes, these writer's goals, added to the exigence, audience, and constraints of Bitzer's rhetorical situation compose the rhetorical problem (24). For them any effective instruction in expository composition must begin with a complete and realistic rhetorical problem because, according to their research, the difference between good and poor writers is how fully they analyze and respond to its elements (29-30).

The inherent artificiality of the composition classroom can be overcome if contexts provided for communication exercises can be, if not real, realistic. If students are provided with assignments that can be analyzed as genuine rhetorical problems, and if they can be taught to analyze these problems and plan their responses in terms of such analyses real writing skill, applicable outside the classroom, can be developed.

An assignment that establishes a rhetorical problem provides a realistic context for communication, a case. Effective cases describe unresolved situations realistically involving the students as they attempt, through exposition, to resolve them. They provide, as will a real situation, a subject, a reader, and a problem to solve--a need to write (Tedlock 1981:253). Effective cases include as much information about exigence, audience, and constraints as is normally stated or implied in a real situation. For example, a case involving freshman ESL students at a small American college follows:

> The Dean of Students is concerned that many international students do not enjoy living here. He would like to make the campus a better place for them but he does not know exactly what the problems are.
>
> Compose an essay, in the form of a letter to him, that identifies one general problem you have experienced that he can help solve.

The exigence, or communication need, is obvious. It directly involves the student. The audience, or reader, is specifically named. Two constraints are stated, that the document should be written as a letter and that the problem discussed must be within the Dean's authority to change.

With such a context provided, each student is ready to individually analyze the rhetorical problem. The first element analyzed must be the audience because it is the existence of the reader that creates the need for communication at all, and the reader determines the specific exigence, constraints, and the goals each student must work with. Thus, audience analysis is the major step in dealing with the rhetorical problem.

When a student understands, to extend the example, the Dean's attitudes, interests, and authority, the problem can be solved through the setting of specific communication goals. The first goal, how the writer wants to affect the reader, cannot be set until the student has selected a specific issue to explain, has evaluated it in terms of the Dean's authority to deal with it, and has decided whether to simply inform him or to also propose a specific solution. The second goal, how the

writer wants to be perceived by the reader, must be set with reference to the first, and specific elements of the exposition--depth of discussion, level of language, tone--are determined by this decision. From these goals of effect and impression, the third and fourth rhetorical goals of content development and form are set.

Students have difficulty learning to communicate effectively in writing if their writing is not required to communicate. Writing instruction centered in realistic communication situations is not artificial, for it teaches the process as it really exists. For ESL students, writing instruction that emphasizes the priority of communication is accessible, sensible, and valuable because it makes the need to write seem real.

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INNER IMPRESSIONS, OUTER EXPRESSIONS, AND REAL LEARNING

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COMMUNICATION AND CRITICISM

Communication thrives in a non-threatening situation. We are more likely to talk or write to people who we feel are interested in us and what we have to say than to people who are going to criticize us. Yet in our role as writing teachers, we must continually correct and criticize our students' writing. Journals can provide a non-threatening situation which encourages communication. In journals we can focus on content rather than form. When students can express their ideas without worrying about criticism, they relax and try new words and constructions. They begin to think of their teacher as a caring person instead of a critic and consider writing to be something worthwhile in real life.

57 VARIETIES (ALMOST)

There are many varieties of journal assignments. The most common is an account of daily activities, but even this topic has many possibilities. At the very lowest level, A Writing Book: English in Everyday Life has fill-in-the-blank journal entries. This, with its expansions, is enough for level one. But for level two, after a student has written about his day for a couple of weeks, the teacher can say, "This week, write about the things you smell." Then talk about how different smells can be described and write these words on the blackboard. Some possibilities are sharp, acrid, sweet, fragrant, sour, pungent, appetizing, mouth-watering, rotten, and sickening. In the following weeks, the other four senses can be treated similarly. It's fun to bring different things to class to be felt, tasted, heard, seen, smelled and described in connection with these assignments.

Another facet of daily life is conversations participated in and overheard. Ask your students to write specific bits of conversation. This will make them more observant of common, idiomatic English. Ask them, "What do you hear American students say between classes?" "What do you hear on the radio or TV?"

Encourage your students to describe not only their actions, but also their feelings. This can be assigned in connection with daily activities (Today I feel pressured because I have to work overtime and study for a test), or the five senses (When I eat Lao food, it tastes hot and spicy and I feel contented) or overheard conversations (When I try to listen to American students, I feel frustrated because I can't understand what they are saying).

After the students have expanded their vocabulary for describing feelings, they will be able to write about how they felt during a period of time in their lives. Ask them, "What is the first thing you remember about your school years?" "How did you usually feel during this time?" "What things and people were most important to you when you were a teenager or a very young child?" "What caused this period to come to an end?" After this assignment, students might like to think about the last question in depth and consider the various turning points in their lives, the events that have shaped their lives and made them the kind of person that they are.

A challenging topic for intermediate and advanced students is writing an imaginary conversation. This may be with a famous person they have never met, or someone they know, but have difficulty talking to. The conversation may also be with an object such as their car, their stomach, or their job. The teacher can suggest questions to get the conversations started such as "Why did you _____?" How did you really feel about _____?" or "What were you thinking when _____?"

TIME WARP

Journals are interesting tools for looking at the past and to the future. Looking at the past, students can write about "My Earliest Memories" or "Stories My Grandparents Told Me." Or the teacher can ask the students to think for a week about how things were different in their country when their parents were young. Then each day they can write about a different facet of this topic: dating, marriage, clothes, religion, daily life, money, work, politics, education, childrearing, superstitions, or home remedies.

Looking toward the future, the teacher can ask the students to imagine for a week that each day they are 10 years older and to write a diary of their daily activities as if they were that age. They could also include their thoughts and feelings about this imagined age and schedule.

Finally, there are many less serious topics for journal writing. Students can remember their first funny feelings when they came to the United States, observe crazy things that Americans do, or describe humorous language mix-ups. They can expound on their favorite English words. And they can try limericks and acrostic poetry. ENJOY! ENJOY!

Journals are fun. After a semester of journal writing, you will find that your students enjoy writing more and you have better rapport with them. They have more confidence that they can communicate and that someone is interested in what they have to say. Don't be surprised if students say that journal writing is the most interesting and helpful part of their composition class.

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This paper is based on a presentation made by Sue Kelly and Kay Goodier at the TEXTESOL V Spring Workshop, April 3, 1982.

USING INVENTION HEURISTICS TO TEACH WRITING

Part III: More Methods to Try

Ann E. Daubney-Davis
Houston Community College

The second article in this three-part series examined two categories of pre-writing exercises, brainstorming and sets of questions which assist the writer in exploring the nature and scope of the topic. This paper will introduce a few additional heuristics and suggest applications for pre-writing in ESL.

In addition to Knepper's adaptation of tagnemic invention (1975, discussed in Part II of this series), another heuristic of the second category mentioned above has been developed by Richard Larson (1968). Larson's model for invention is a very practical approach, and since it involves a needs analysis of the topic and discipline in which one is writing, it is indeed well-suited to the current direction of ESL curriculum. Larson writes that a thesis can be developed by asking and answering a set of questions specific to the topic or discipline, and the first step of his method is to determine the topic category. Larson's taxonomy includes abstract concepts, specific events, groups of events, single items, questions, and propositions. The heuristic itself consists of lists of questions pertinent to each of the above categories. For example, the following writing assignment would fall under the proposition category: "Agree or disagree--It is a good idea to require all graduating college seniors to pass an English composition test." For propositions, Larson suggests these questions as a pre-writing exercise:

1. What must the reader accept before he will believe it?
2. How can it be proven?
3. What can be said in opposition to it?
4. What are the probabilities that the action, if taken, will do what it is supposed to do?

Once the writer has developed responses to the questions, he or she is ready to organize and actually write the paper. While writing college history exams, reviews, and physics lab reports is a skill most American college freshmen develop only through experience, obviously the acquisition of academic writing skills is a longer process for non-native speakers. This is due not only to grammatical deficiencies, but to rhetorical and cultural factors as well. It therefore seems that ESL curriculum writers need to explore the sort of content as well as the rhetorical structure expected in writing for other academic fields. As ESL instructors, we can, through some informal research, ask our colleagues about what they expect (and don't get) from foreign students' term papers and essays.

A very different method, used when revising a paper, requires the writer to do an outline of his/her first draft and compare this with what he/she had intended to accomplish in the paper. This heuristic, the "Bare-Bones Outline," comes from Gregory and Elizabeth Cowan's text Writing (1980) and consists of a list of questions to ask about expository prose. I have included it here because of its effectiveness in showing students how invention can be part of the revision process, although it is actually an ex post facto invention technique. In doing an outline of a completed draft, the student who has not substantiated his/her thesis or has taken off in several directions recognizes this fault and sees the need to revise above the sentence level.

One last heuristic, cubing (Cowan and Cowan, 1980), combines brainstorming techniques with traditional rhetorical invention. This invention process can be visualized as covering all six sides of a cube which holds the subject inside. Cubing is playing with form and content, applying the traditional Aristotelian topics to a subject to see what combination will best suit the writer's purpose. The six sides of the cube are 1. Describing, 2. Comparing, 3. Analyzing, 4. Associating, 5. Arguing, and 6. Applying. The procedure is to examine the topic or question by brainstorming a few minutes at each side of the cube, using the same technique described for looping in part II of this series. This invention heuristic essentially lays the groundwork for an analysis paper, and as such it is quite transferable to academic and non-academic writing tasks (e.g. extended definition, project proposal and summary).

In this series, I have briefly described several invention heuristics. A major reason why heuristics used in freshman composition have received attention in recent ESL materials and journals is that traditional composition classes (focused on imitation of rhetorical structure) often encourage mediocre content. The task is to practice the form using whatever topic is least inconvenient. There is a definite, ever-present interplay between a writer's approach and a language's rhetorical structures. What trained writers write is clearly affected by their cultures' rhetorical traditions. However, it is vital to remember that contrary to the way writing has been taught, few discourses (and for that matter, very few visual paragraphs) are limited to one rhetorical structure. Furthermore, while it is productive to teach rhetorical structures individually, rhetorical invention, the first half of the writing process, merits attention as a separate process.

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A CALL FOR PAPERS

I would like to publish a call for papers in the field of ESL or cross-cultural communications for the 1983 Midwest Regional Conference on English in the Two-Year College (a regional arm of the National Council of Teachers of English). The conference will be held in Kansas City, Kansas, on February 17-19, 1983.

Format for presentations can include panel discussions, demonstrations, materials preparation, etc. We hope to draw presenters from a wide area of the Midwest who are involved with ESL - preferably, but not necessarily - at the community college level. Those in secondary, university, refugee, and adult education are also eligible and welcome. Persons interested in participating in the conference as presenters, presiders, or recorders should contact me by phone or letter as follows:

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

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NOW IS THE TIME--TO SAVE!

For five years the subscription rate for TECFORS has remained the same--$3.00 a year. Now because of postage costs, the price of TECFORS, we regret to announce, will go up in 1983. Beginning on January 1, 1983, the rates will be $4.00 per year, $7.00 for two years (6.50 per year abroad; 12.00 for two years abroad).

Your prompt renewal, however, will mean savings for us, which we want to pass on to you. Therefore, all who renew their subscriptions--or who subscribe for the first time--before December 31, 1982, may do so at the present rates: $3.00 per year; $6.00 for two years (5.50 per year abroad; 11.00 for two years abroad).

To take advantage of this offer, just fill out the slip on the back of this issue), and mail it with your check to Nancy V. Lee, TECFORS, Intensive English Program, 1103 West 24th Street, Austin, Texas 78705.

We will appreciate your continued support of TECFORS in this way, and we are always happy for your manuscripts and your comments.

Introducing...

We are pleased to welcome Ann Daubney-Davis, whom you have met as the author of the recent series of articles on invention heuristics, as the GUEST EDITOR of this issue. Ann Daubney-Davis received her master's degree in English Applied Linguistics from the University of Houston after teaching ESL in the Houston public schools for two years. At Houston Community College, where she is department head of ESL for college credit, she enjoys teaching both conversation and advanced composition courses.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN MANIPULATION AND ASSIMILATION OF GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES

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Humanities
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Most schools offer grammar/composition courses in which students learn grammatical structures and also write compositions. We, as teachers, assume that the structures we are teaching in the grammar segment will be used when the student writes a composition. Is this really the case? We often see students who understand grammatical structures when they are presented in multiple-choice or fill-in formats; however, when we read their compositions, we find these same structures have been used incorrectly or not at all. Sentence construction activities help bridge the gap between grammar manipulation and true grammar assimilation.

Sentence construction activities are simple to create; they consist of two parts. The first is a context, which can be a picture story, for example, a comic strip such as "Garfield" or "Peanuts," or a passage containing only choppy sentences. A passage context for "Little Red Riding Hood" could be written:

> Once there was a little girl. Her name was Little Red Riding Hood. She lived in a small cottage. It was on the edge of a large forest. One day her mother said, "Your grandmother is sick. You must take her this basket of food."...

The second part of the activity is a worksheet with lists of grammatical structures and blank lines for the student's answers. An example of a worksheet for a unit on coordination would be:

1. two sentences combined with <u>but</u>

_____

2. two sentences combined with a conjunctive adverb

_____

3. two sentences joined only with a semicolon

_____

Picture contexts can be found in comic strips, grammar texts, or in picture composition texts (see bibliography). They are most useful when students are to produce structures found in simple sentences (direct objects, past tense, or present perfect). Passage contexts can be adapted from fables, fairy tales, or short stories, and these work best when students are working with sentence combining. The worksheet is prepared from the objectives of the course; the grammatical language is that used by the teacher or in the text.

To begin the activity, the teacher explains the picture story or passage. The students are told to write sentences according to the guidelines on the worksheet. The sentences which they write must fit somewhere into the context of the story. It is not necessary when working with passage contexts that the students combine sentences taken directly from the text. They may invent their own sentences; however, the result must be an appropriate statement for the given context. For example, the sentence

Here is a basket of food; take it to your grandmother.

would be acceptable for item three above. However, the sentence

Let's go to the beach; I want to go swimming.

would not. Although it is grammatically correct, it does not fit into the context of the passage.

When students first start working on the sentence construction activities, it is best to have them work in class and in pairs. They can help each other with any problems they might be having. When they have completed the activity, the students put their sentences on the chalkboard. The teacher can see immediately which structure the students have not mastered; the problems can then be clarified for the whole class. After the students have completed the first in-class activity, a new context and a duplicate of the worksheet are given to them, and they write a new set of sentences for the new context as homework. During the next class period, the sentences are put on the chalkboard and errors are discussed.

The time used in preparing pictures and stories is well used. The same context can be used for many different grammar lessons. In addition, the activity serves not only to teach but also to test; when the teacher feels that the students are ready, a copy of the worksheet is given to the students along with a new context. Therefore, when test day comes, there are no suprises. By telling the students at the start of the activity that they will see this same worksheet as a test, the teacher encourages the students to pay special attention to the assignments and in-class discussions. In addition, retesting is simple: a new story or picture is used with the worksheet.

What are the advantages of using the sentence construction technique? Through these activities, the students reinforce the terminology as well as the appropriate use of grammatical structures. Structures are also produced in a context that is clear to the teacher and the student; therefore, it is easier to determine whether the student truly understands the structure. In the discussion sessions, the teacher can immediately see where problems lie and what needs to be learned; there is a chance for the teacher to analyze student errors and to explain difficult aspects and special uses of the structures.

However, the most important advantage of sentence construction is that students are producing sentences without one specific stimulus, as in short-answer exercises. They are using grammatical structures as they will in real-life: they are describing a situation or event in a coherent context. The teacher can better evaluate the student's understanding of the grammar point since the context is clear to all. The process, in short, offers the control found in grammar exercises and the freedom of the unstructured composition.

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TOPIC SCHEMAS: A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

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EFL composition teachers typically face two questions: "How do we teach students to write clear expository English?" and "How do we elicit the best writing possible from the students?"

Although they are intimately related, these two questions actually deal with two distinct aspects of the problem of teaching writing. The first question deals with the materials to be presented to the students, the syllabus of the course, indeed, the basic objectives set for the course. Throughout all the various responses to this question, embodied in a myriad of EFL writing texts, the initiative is in the hands of the teacher because, after all, it is the teacher who teaches.

The second question, however, must be addressed if an EFL composition course, especially a college-level course emphasizing expository writing, is to succeed. Here, the issue is not so much what the teacher must do, as how he or she can consciously draw the student into the composing process. In the past, as Raimes (1976) has noted, the discussion on this question has tended to become polarized between the advocates of free composition and those of controlled composition. In fact, however, neither pole really pertains to the process of composition: controlled compositions do away with any conscious composing process, while totally free writing presupposes that this process will evolve by itself, with a minimum of guidance in a classroom.

But in the last few years, more attention has been paid to this cognitive process itself, and teachers have become more aware that focussing students' attention on a perfect final product will do little to turn EFL students into acceptable writers (cf. Zamel 1982). In EFL composition re-

search as well as basic writing research, teachers have begun to study the cognitive prerequisites for expository writing (Flower 1979; Lunsford 1979) and the ways in which students use pre-writing activities to shape their compositions (Zamel 1982: 199-203). However, this welcome development has not yet had the impact on published EFL writing texts that one might hope for. In particular, in one crucial area, topic selection, most texts adopt a most traditionalist - and I believe questionable - approach.

For example, Raimes (1978) has developed an elaborate, even ingenious method for stimulating students to write freely and for using their product to teach specific syntactic and rhetorical structures. And yet, reading the proposed exercises, especially the core compositions and the proposed assignments for rhetorical structures, one can imagine many EFL students having difficulty mustering the motivation to write on these topics. In fact, I have noticed a frequent reluctance on students' parts to expend much effort in a composition class on <u>any</u> topic which has simply been handed to them.

This observation is not intended as an endorsement of totally free composition in lieu of structured topic assignments. Nor in fact is it even a rejection of Raimes' thesis (1976: 391-2) that the teacher can best control the rhetorical and syntactic structures of his or her students' writing by controlling the topic. But what I do question is the tendency to equate <u>controlling</u> the topic with <u>selecting</u> it for the students. According to Raimes, (1976: 392)

> As content can be regarded "principally as a vehicle to teach grammar and rhetoric" (Kaplan 1971, p. 55), the choice of task is crucial. Here is the place for control - teacher control. The teacher provides the content. He chooses interesting, challenging stimulus with intellectual content...

While there is much truth in this view (depending on how one interprets the word "control"), one cannot deny the truth in Zamel's statement that "writing instruction that focuses on rhetorical forms and requires students to compose papers on artificial topics in order to demonstrate mastery of these forms fails to recognize that writers write both quantitatively more and qualitatively better when they are composing papers about topics that engage them." (1982: 204).

To address this problem, and to perfect the "cognitive" approach to EFL composition teaching, I propose a slightly different strategy to formuating major composition assignments, which I call <u>topic schemas</u>. Actually, this idea is not particularly revolutionary, insofar as many teachers have undoubtedly used exercises similar to the following in their classrooms. But I would like to generalize the methodology and present some principles for its application in a wide range of classroom situations.

A topic schema differs from a topic only in that it doesn't present the student with a complete subject to write about, but rather with a rubric for selecting a particular topic. At times (especially in the early days of the course) the rubric may be somewhat narrow compared to the later period. But in all cases, it is the student who actually determines the topic of the paper.

Furthermore, a topic schema should include, where possible, a set procedure for generating the information which will form the basis of the paper. This procedure can form part of the regular classroom activities which precede the actual writing of the composition.

Finally, topic schemas should involve considerable interaction among students in the classroom, as well as outside research, when appropriate. This intersubjective activity at the pre-writing stage helps to sensitize the student to the fact that writing is a public, not a purely private process.

To illustrate this process, let us take a fairly simple assignment designed to teach comparisons and contrasts. I'm sure many teachers have assigned their students to "compare and contrast two important cities from your home countries." Preparation for such a paper would usually include a presentation of the various grammatical structures which typically embody contrasts, along with a model essay illustrating the rhetortical patterns of this particular discourse function. However, as inherently interesting the topic might be, it is simply imposed on the students, and in most writing classes, the students are expected to rely on their own private methods for organizing their ideas.

As an alternative, the teacher might use the topic schema approach. The basic topic is the same, but the manner in which it is presented is different. To begin with, the class should be divided into small discussion groups, with care taken to avoid concentration of students of the same nationality in the same groups. The teacher opens the discussion by asking one of the students to discuss the difference between two cities in his or her country. It is wise to select a student from a country which has easily-contrasted pairs of well-known cities (e.g. Sao Paulo vs. Rio, Beijing vs. Shanghai, etc.). Information elicited from the student should be written on the board in schematic form. The teacher will have prepared in advance a written form embodying the schematic, with a number of standards of comparison of cities, e.g. population, geography, history, principal economic activity, climate, scenic attractions, etc. After the class discussion, the teacher passes the forms out to the discussion groups and instructs the students to prepare for a composition comparing and contrasting two cities in the country of one of their classmates. They will choose four or five of the criteria of comparision and gather information by interviewing their subjects and entering the data on the schematic. (The teacher can direct the students to the reference section of the library in case their informants lack some specific factual knowledge.) Following the interviews, the students will then write their compositions based on the information they have gathered.

I regard this assignment as a topic schema rather than a topic because the student plays a role in the selection of the final topic of the paper. At the same time, the selection takes place within a broad rubric which guarantees that the student will use the syntactic and rhetorical structures that the course is trying to teach. In addition, the teacher provides the student with a structured procedure for the student to develop the data for his or her paper. Thus, not only is the topic of the paper likely to be interesting, but the manner in which it is written will involve the class in lively discussion.

In the second part of this paper, I will present some model topic schemas for various rhetorical notions and show how this concept can be used to teach students the basic principles of writing research papers.

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THE WRITING STRATEGIES OF ESL STUDENTS

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What ESL teacher has never been frustrated with students who speak fluent and nearly flawless English but hand in essays which exhibit a total lack of subject-verb agreement, tense control, or article usage? Can't these students hear what they are doing wrong? Don't they reread their work? Can't they edit their papers?

The problem is not that most ESL students cannot recognize errors in their written work; it is that they do not allow themselves to find them. This phenomenon is due to the nature of the writing process as defined by Flower and Hayes (1981). They describe writing as a three-part process, consisting of planning (organizing thoughts and setting goals), translating (putting the ideas into writing), and reviewing (evaluating and revising the writing). In addition, writing is a recursive process, with all three stages operating continuously. The stimulus, either conscious or subconscious, that causes a writer to switch from one of the three stages to another can be called the "monitor." Many writers do not allow their monitors to work at full capacity, thereby thwarting their writing development.

In a study conducted last spring, I worked with eight Vietnamese university students. Most of them had been in this country for seven years, although two had left Vietnam more recently. They ranged in age from eighteen to thirty. Each wrote three essays specifically for this project. In addition, up to seven other essays from each subject were analyzed in terms of the grammatical errors they contained and the revisions made during the writing of that draft.

The revisions were grouped into five categories depending on the correctness of the original and revised texts. Almost seventy-five percent of all the revisions made by all the subjects resulted in a grammatically correct final text. Half of these, however, were revisions of an original text that was already grammatically correct (and were, therefore, not grammatical revisions), and half were corrections of incorrect text. Approximately fifteen percent of the revisions started with either a correct or incorrect text and resulted in a grammatically incorrect text. In the remaining ten percent of the revisions, the effect on the grammaticality of the text could not be determined.

The analysis showed that the number of revisions made and the number of errors remaining had no relation to each other. For example, subject HA had the highest number of errors but the lowest number of revisions, while subject HX had the next greatest number of errors, but also the

greatest number of revisions. Subjects DN, NN, and DT made nearly the same number of errors, and although DN and NN made about the same amount of revisions, DT made many more.

This can be explained by the fact that the subjects exhibited their own individual writing strategies. HA did his revising almost entirely in his head, while HX needed to see what she was thinking in order to revise it. NN relied on how something sounded in order to determine its grammaticality, while NM preferred to use a dictionary to validate her word choice.

But in spite of the subjects' great diversity of writing strategies, they exhibited a common trait regarding use of the monitor. A grammatical error that was not corrected, or a section that was not revised soon after it was written almost never changed later on. After the physical aspect of the writing process had been completed, the subjects began to shut down their monitors and, therefore, hinder their writing ability. It was no longer necessary to move into the planning or translating stages; the ideas had been conceived and placed on paper. This left only the reviewing process. But writing involves all three stages - planning, translating, reviewing - at once. The monitor will not work if the writer has consciously stopped operating in two of the stages. In other words, it is impossible to simply review a piece of writing for errors. Unless all three writing stages are allowed to work, none of them are truly functional.

This is particularly important for ESL teachers to consider. A writer who shows poor control of written English grammar may actually be a very effective writer who simply needs help with grammar. Conversely, a writer whose compositions are more nativelike may really be an ineffective writer unskilled in the writing process but reasonably adept at English grammar.

Studies have defined poor writers in a number of ways. Flower and Hayes (1981) say poor writers concentrate on form to the exclusion of ideas. Flanigan and Menendez (1980) identify poor writers as those who make only mechanical or form-related changes as opposed to structural or conceptual ones. For Pianko (1979), poor writers do not review their work in order to generate new ideas and develop cohesion. Each of these definitions identify poor writers not in terms of how grammatical their writing is, but how effectively they utilize all three stages of the writing process.

Improving ESL students' writing is not simply a matter of helping them come up with ideas before they start writing or teaching them to check their grammar after they have finished. They need to see the importance of not putting limits on the writing process. Students who know that revising can begin before the first word is placed on the paper and that planning can continue long after the last word has actually been written have truly mastered the writing process. Grammatical competence, rhetorical invention, and creativity can only improve after this obstacle to the writing process has been cleared.

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